



# News Release

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NOTE: this document has been revised to correct a context error.

## **Tell Dad to take a hike for Father's Day — eat better and quit smoking, too!**

*Simple changes, regular health check-ups can lead to better health for all, especially men*

**OLYMPIA** — We've all heard the stereotype of a man who never goes to the doctor. That may be a factor in women outliving men. The state Department of Health urges men to get a fresh start on their health for Father's Day by getting regular checkups, being active, and eating better.

"Men can really benefit from a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables," said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. "When I was growing up I remember the men in my community saying, 'I'm a meat and potatoes kind of guy,' but adding a salad and a vegetable will help balance that meal and provide the nutrition men need."

Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains daily is a key to better overall health and weight control. Most men don't eat enough fruits and vegetables (four out of five men). The state health department recommends at least five daily servings of fruits and vegetables for everyone.

Many men don't get the physical activity they need to promote [better health](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/NutritionPA/our_states_approach/best_practices/default.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/NutritionPA/our\_states\_approach/best\_practices/default.htm). That can lead to serious health problems like diabetes. One in 14 men in Washington has [diabetes](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/diabetes/default.htm) (www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/diabetes/default.htm).

Something as simple as a hike or a walk is a good way to get some physical activity in your life. Start by using walking trails near your home, walking your local mall, or going to a neighborhood park. Swimming laps at the pool is also a good option. Physical activity can help keep your weight under control, help lower your blood pressure, and improve your health.

Lifetime milestones can be a good guide for health screening. When you hit your forties, talk to your doctor about screenings for diabetes and prostate cancer. In your fifties, you should be checked for hearing loss, and colon and rectal cancer. In your sixties, if you have a family history or risk factors such as smoking or thyroid disease, talk to your doctor about osteoporosis and a bone density test. Some tests may have to be done sooner or later depending on your family history, personal health history, and overall health.

Smoking increases your risk of coronary heart disease, which is the second leading cause of death among men in Washington. About 400,000 men in our state smoke. You can get help quitting by calling the state's free Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW; 1-877-2NO-FUME in Spanish). One in four men have high blood pressure and one in three men have high cholesterol in Washington. Some conditions become more common in men as they age. The same goes for injuries from falls. Among men 65 and older, hospitalizations from falls increased 16 percent from 2000 to 2008 (from 3,244 hospitalizations up to 4,510).

Improving your diet, getting more exercise, and going to the doctor for these screenings is the first step toward better health. People in your life will thank you for it.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov">http://www.doh.wa.gov</a> for a healthy dose of information.
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